

Today, only one of six children eligible for Federal child assistance receives it. Twenty-two States have waiting lists for child care. And families in 37 States were in worse circumstances in February of 2011 than they were in February of 2010 as the child care waiting list continues to grow, copayments rise, eligibility tightens, and reimbursement rates stagnate.

After three decades of wage stagnation in this country, with paychecks failing to keep up with the cost of health care, housing, and education, child care has become an unaffordable necessity for too many Americans.

A related problem that we also must acknowledge is the gender wage gap. Women only earn 77 cents for every dollar earned by men, according to the Census Bureau. Yet two-thirds of the women are now either the primary breadwinners or co-breadwinners in their family. So when there are wage gaps, entire families suffer. That means less money for food on the table and everything else that a family needs to survive.

Two days ago, Senate Republicans blocked a bill introduced by Senator BARBARA MIKULSKI that would strengthen the Fair Labor Standards Act's protections against pay inequities based on gender. As President Obama said, Republicans have once again put "partisan politics ahead of women and families." This is wrong. Republican Senators ought to explain to their constituents why they did not vote for Senator MIKULSKI's bill.

Let me be very clear: equal pay for equal work isn't just a woman's issue—it's a family issue. For the millions of American women whose families depend on their earnings, reliable child care is vital.

It's time to level the playing field for working women. I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 5188 so that all parents, particularly working women, have the child care they need to stay on the job.

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#### SPACE CAMP CELEBRATES 30TH ANNIVERSARY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. BROOKS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BROOKS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to commend the United States Space and Rocket Center on its upcoming June 15 30th anniversary of Space Camp. Established in 1982, Space Camp in Huntsville, Alabama, is a national leader in informal science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) education and workforce development.

Space Camp uses the leading edge of spaceflight technology simulation to teach campers real-world concepts and skills which translate into future academic and professional careers for students and teachers. The Space Camp program provides an essential public relations and support role to both gov-

ernment and private space programs by inspiring and training America's next generation of explorers, engineers, scientists, and leaders.

For emphasis, with nearly 600,000 graduates of the program, Space Camp has a 30-year track record of success in inspiring young people to pursue successful careers, particularly in STEM fields. Space Camp alumni include NASA mission control directors, NASA scientists, NASA engineers, executives of corporations, State government officials, national news correspondents, as well as soldiers and aviators who defend America's freedom every day. Graduates of Space Camp include three NASA astronauts and one astronaut from the European Space Agency.

Space Camp contributes to the future of America's exceptionalism in science, engineering, and research by instilling an exciting, life-changing educational experience with values of leadership, teamwork, and hard work. Space Camp's 30th anniversary is the perfect opportunity to recognize their important work and incredible achievements.

I congratulate Space Camp on their 30 years of unparalleled success and wish them well and salute them as they embark on their next 30 years.

#### POVERTY AND UNEMPLOYMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE) for 5 minutes.

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Speaker, as the founder of the Congressional Out of Poverty Caucus, I rise to continue talking about the crisis of poverty and the ongoing jobs emergency in America today.

Tea Party Republicans are busy blaming the President for our struggling economy, and the fact that our economy only gained 69,000 jobs last month. I want to remind my Republican colleagues that it was their deregulation, failed economic policies, and two wars off-budget that had our Nation losing over a million jobs every month when President Obama came into office. We were losing over a half-million jobs every single month.

Now they are complaining the Democrats have not been quick enough in cleaning up the Republicans' mess. The President and a Democratic Congress helped to stem that tide, and now despite every roadblock and Republican obstructionism, our economy is growing slowly and jobs are slowly coming back. So I don't understand how anyone can even try to blame the President's economic policies when they have refused to enact any of them.

Republicans have refused to work with us and to help Americans refinance underwater homes, to help protect investors and consumers by implementing the sound regulations of the Dodd-Frank bill. Also, they refuse to pass the American Jobs Act, or any sort of jobs plan, quite frankly. In fact, Republicans have done everything possible to obstruct every proposal to cre-

ate jobs at every turn. Even though 56 percent of Americans think jobs should be Congress' number one priority, Republicans have failed to pass even one significant jobs bill. Instead, they work to create another false panic about a so-called fiscal cliff if they aren't allowed to immediately extend hundreds of billions of dollars in tax giveaways to the wealthiest 1 percent of Americans.

Mr. Speaker, there are only two real fiscal cliffs that I see. One is the fiscal cliff that will push our entire government over if they can make good on their threats and force our Nation into default and shut the government down. The second fiscal cliff is one that Republicans are pushing American families over the edge of when they cut off, mind you, cut off the emergency extension of critical unemployment benefits for millions of Americans who are struggling to find a job.

Republicans are telling struggling Americans that there is a fiscal cliff if you are out of work; they have to cut off your employment benefits. They are telling struggling Americans that there is a fiscal cliff if you are poor and hungry; they have to cut your food stamps. But somehow, if you are rich and a defense contractor, Republicans make it their business to protect you from facing any cliff or falling off of any cliff.

This is not the path forward for our Nation. What we need to do right now is to stop pushing families off fiscal cliffs. We have to support the economy by investing in the American people. We need to get back to growing the middle class by lifting millions of Americans out of poverty.

Mr. Speaker, we must pass the American Jobs Act, invest in our country's infrastructure and transportation needs, increase job training efforts, and strengthen our safety net. Safety net programs like the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and unemployment insurance just don't support struggling families, they support small businesses all across the country and in every single congressional district regardless of one's party.

This Congress must ensure that our Nation's safety net is a bridge that is strong enough to deliver us all, even the most vulnerable, over these troubled waters.

Americans are waiting. Democrats have been prepared to act, and Republicans must join us in creating jobs and reigniting the American Dream for all.

#### HONORING JOHN ROBERT "BOB" SLAUGHTER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, along with Representatives MORGAN GRIFFITH and ROBERT HURT, to honor the memory of a constituent, a World War II veteran, a community